



# Flood harvested fields

## What to do:

After the harvest, if water is available flood fields from 4-to-12 inches deep and keep them flooded until March 1. Flood to varying depths to create a diversity of habitats. Shorebirds forage on wet mud and in water up to four inches deep; to attract dabbling ducks and wading birds, provide water up to 12 inches deep. Remember, since your field is sloped, the depth of the water will vary.

If flooding more than one field, stagger the flood-ups to coincide with wildlife usage and to increase the amount of time flooded areas are available. During winter, leave flash-board risers set in your fields to capture and hold rainwater. Avoid draining fields where rainwater accumulates. Be sure your flooding plan fits with local irrigation water demands, including seasonal waterflows provided for migratory fish.

## Regulatory agencies to contact:

Irrigation District, Corps, NRCS, and USFWS.

## Benefits:

- Creates shallow wet areas that make

waste seeds and invertebrates available to wintering waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds.

- Creates excellent winter habitat for waterfowl to use for loafing and courtship.

- Provides a good environment for insects eaten by wildlife when fields are chopped and flooded.

- Helps break down stubble and speed up decomposition through the feeding and trampling actions of waterfowl and the development of aquatic microbe and insect populations.

- Helps with ground water recharge in some soils and may help with flood control in some areas by storing water.

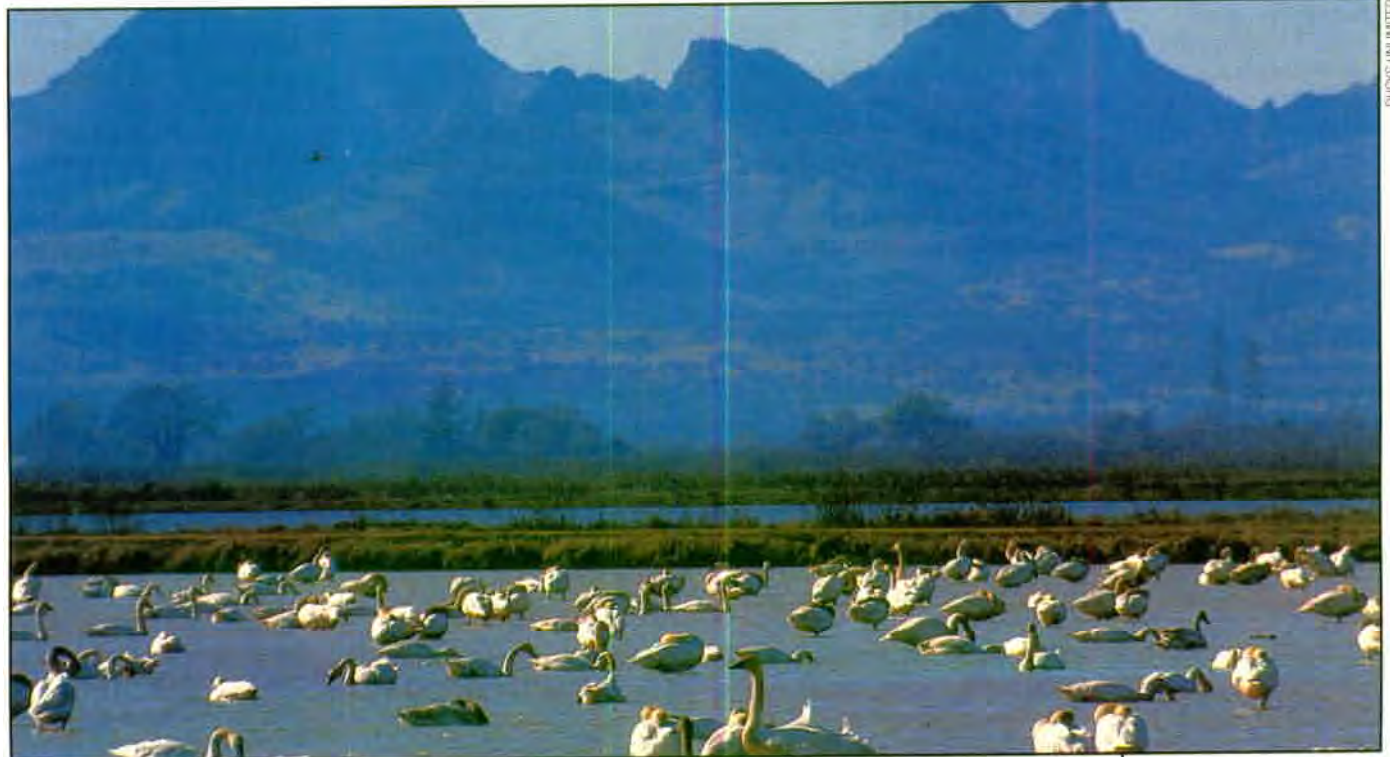
- Helps control weeds.

- Prevents wind erosion.

- May add some natural fertilizer (bird droppings) while helping decomposition in the field.

- May help diversify your farm's income base by providing hunting opportunities for ducks and geese.

*Flooding a harvested field to varying depths makes waste grains and other feed available to wintering birds. Tundra swans are pictured on this rolled and flooded field near the Sutter Buttes.*



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